

**Subject:** Zoning Reform Request

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**From:** Elliot Baker

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2026 2:27 PM

**To:** Disch, Lisa <LDisch@a2gov.org>

**Cc:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>; City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>

**Subject:** Zoning Reform Request

Hello,

My name is Elliot Baker. I'm an Ann Arbor resident and work downtown at the Inter-Cooperative Council of Ann Arbor. I've lived in ICC houses since I moved out of the dorms after my freshman year, and now, it's the only affordable option for me to continue living in Ann Arbor.

I'm writing to request that the commission consider aligning occupancy regulations in our city with recent progressive changes adopted in Colorado. There, housing cooperatives successfully advocated for the passage of HB24-1007, which prohibits local governments from capping the number of unrelated residents in a dwelling unit. Instead, the law focuses on basing occupancy limits on genuine safety concerns (such as minimum square footage per occupant) rather than arbitrary definitions tied to blood or legal relationships. As housing prices continue to rise, many working adults are unable to afford living alone and are forming "found families" and cohousing groups. Removing restrictions on the number of unrelated residents provides non-traditional households with greater flexibility and fosters more inclusive communities, reducing housing instability.

Legalizing higher occupancy in existing housing stock can have significant benefits, including lowering per-person housing costs, since more residents can share the rent. This change also provides greater security; currently, homes advertised as "6 bed plus office" often operate informally as 7-bedroom units, forcing residents off the lease to comply with regulations. This undermines their housing security and complicates code enforcement. Some larger homes are also subdivided into smaller units, each required to have a full kitchen, even though they are functionally operated as a single shared space. This can result in inefficient use of space, sacrificing potential additional bedrooms or communal areas. By adopting similar reforms as Colorado and focusing occupancy regulations on actual safety standards rather than family relationships, we can increase affordable, stable housing options and support the diverse ways people live together today.

Thank you for your consideration,

**Elliot Baker** (he/him)

Finance Department Liaison

*Inter-Cooperative Council*

